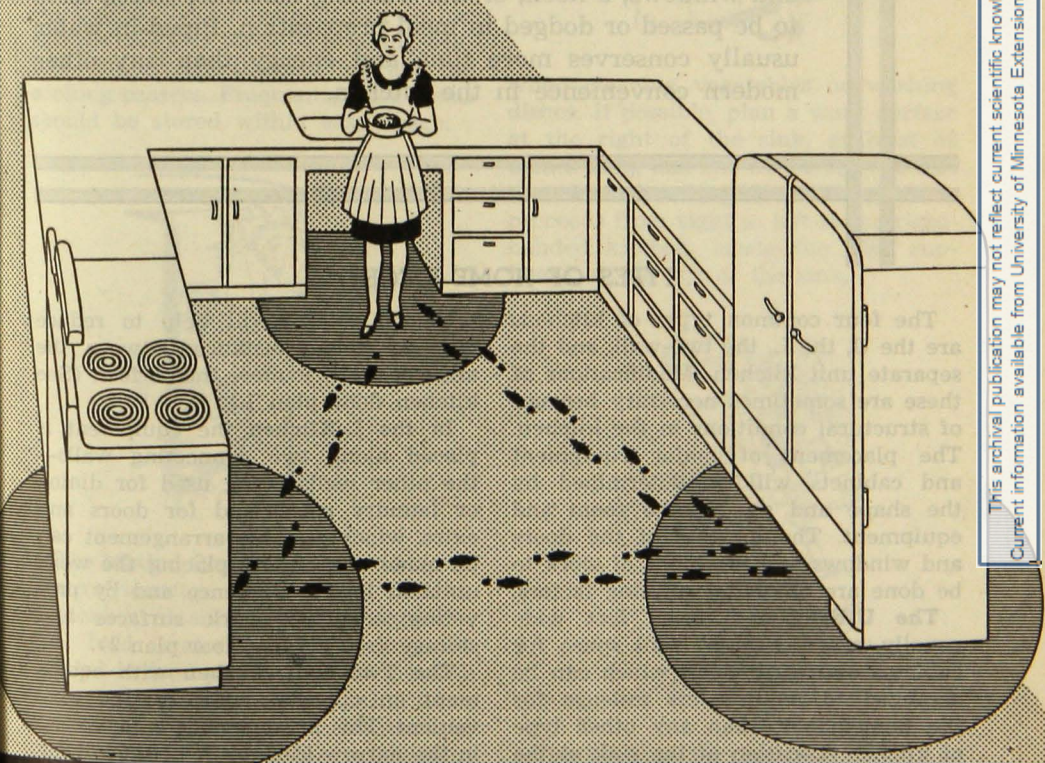


Planning **STEP-SAVING KITCHENS**

MARY MAY MILLER



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Planning Step-Saving Kitchens

Mary May Miller

THE preparation of over 1,000 meals a year consumes more time and energy than any other household task. Therefore, it is vital—for the health, comfort, and convenience of the homemaker—that the kitchen equipment be arranged to reduce daily mileage. Work will flow in a natural sequence if the homemaker travels in a step-saving triangle when preparing meals. In the carefully planned kitchen, it will be unnecessary to shift food materials and equipment from one corner of the kitchen to another. The continuity of work surfaces is frequently broken by improperly placed doors and windows, a nook, or the washing machine, which have to be passed or dodged in meal preparation. Piped-in water usually conserves more time and energy than any other modern convenience in the kitchen.

TYPES OF HOME KITCHENS

The four common types of kitchens are the U, the L, the two-wall, and the separate unit kitchen. Modifications of these are sometimes necessary because of structural conditions in the kitchen. The placement of major equipment and cabinets will be determined by the shape and size of the room and equipment. The location of the doors and windows and the kinds of work to be done are other determining factors.

The U-Kitchen 8 or 9 feet wide usually provides more wall space for cabinets and equipment, which can be arranged to require less mileage for the homemaker, than any other type of kitchen. Location of the sink at the center of the U, the range along the left, and the mixing center along the right arm of the U is an ideal arrangement in this shaped kitchen. A work

table on rollers will help to reduce mileage if the distance between the arms of the U is more than 9 feet. (See kitchen floor plan 1.)

In **the L-Kitchen** the equipment is placed along two connecting walls—the other walls being used for dining or laundry space and for doors and extra windows. This arrangement can be made efficient by placing the work units in logical sequence and by providing adequate work surfaces and storage (see kitchen floor plan 2).

The Two-Wall Kitchen with equipment on opposite walls can be convenient. This arrangement is necessary in the narrow kitchen. It is difficult for more than one person to work in a kitchen less than 8 feet wide. With a door at each end of the room, this type of kitchen becomes the traffic lane to

other rooms, thus interfering with meal preparation (see kitchen floor plan 3).

In the **Separate Unit Kitchen** the work centers are usually placed at three separate points because of the location of doors, windows, and other structural features of the room. This arrangement can be convenient if adequate work surface and storage space are provided at each work center (see kitchen floor plan 4).

BIG THREE IN THE KITCHEN

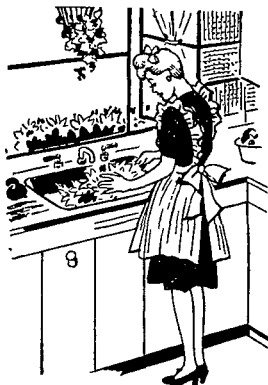
There are three major pieces of equipment around which the modern kitchen can be planned—the *refrigerator*, the *sink*, and the *range*. By grouping supplies and utensils with major equipment, the homemaker can do her kitchen tasks at three step-saving centers—the mixing, the cleaning, and the cooking centers. Frequently used items should be stored within easy reach.



The **Mixing Center** is planned around the *refrigerator*. This center also includes a work surface and the cupboard for food materials and equipment needed in food preparation. If the wall space is limited, store the mixing items at the right of the sink to be near the water supply. Locate the refrigerator elsewhere but not too far away.

The **Cleaning Center** is planned around the *sink* where vegetables are cleaned and the soiled dishes are

stacked, washed, and stored. Storage at this center is needed for vegetable pans, brushes, paring knives, strainers, and waste containers, and for dish pans, cleansers, towels, and other items used



when cleaning vegetables or washing dishes. If possible, plan a work surface at the right of the sink, at least 36 inches long, and one at the left, no less than 30 inches long. Since dishwashing proceeds from right to left in the right-handed kitchen, locate the dish cupboard at the left of the sink.



The **Cooking-Serving Center** is planned around the *range*. If this work center can be located near the dining room door, many steps will be saved at meal time. In the U and L kitchen,

placement of the cooking center at the left of the sink unit and the mixing center at the right is logical and reduces mileage. A work surface and adequate storage for cereals, baked goods, seasonings, coffee, and cooking equipment are needed at this center.

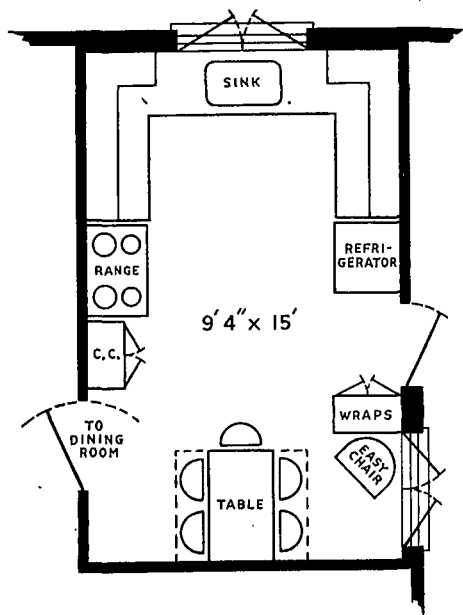
KITCHEN FLOOR PLANS

The following floor plans are presented as a basis for study and discussion. Although they are not model plans, each one has features that may be adapted to your kitchen. Look for the following step-saving features. Apply them to your kitchen to find ways to reduce your daily kitchen mileage.

Step-Saving Features to consider when studying a kitchen floor plan:

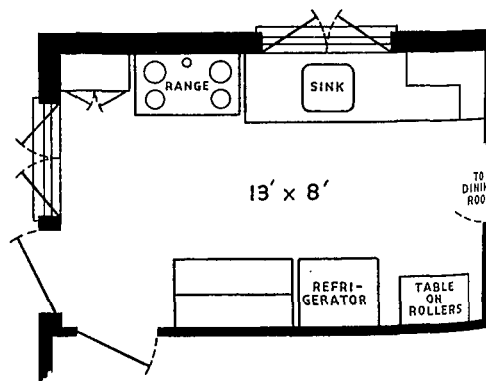
- A storage cupboard and work surface at each work center—mixing, cleaning, cooking center.
- The cooking center near the dining room door. Fuel box near the range.
- Sink near both the mixing and cleaning centers—between if possible.
- Counter with storage space at each side of the sink.
- Dish cabinet at the left of the sink—trays nearby.
- Mixing surface at the right of sink—between the sink and the refrigerator.
- Dining space where it will not crowd working centers.
- Minimum free floor space of 4 feet between the work centers on opposite walls.
- Table on rollers to reduce mileage in the large kitchen.
- No gaps in continuity of a work unit caused by doors and equipment not used in food preparation.
- Doors near corners of the room. Direction of their swing safe, convenient.

Kitchen Floor Plan 1



The U-Kitchen

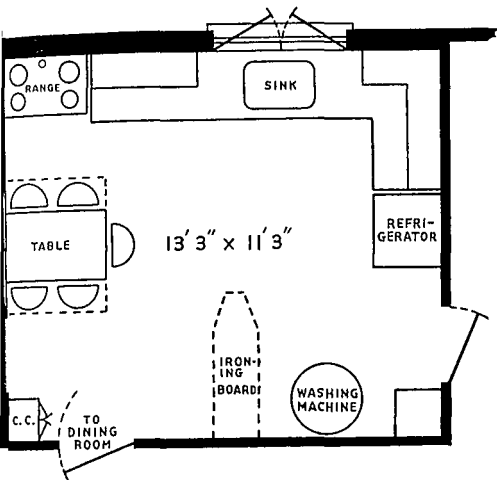
Kitchen Floor Plan 3



The Two-Wall Kitchen

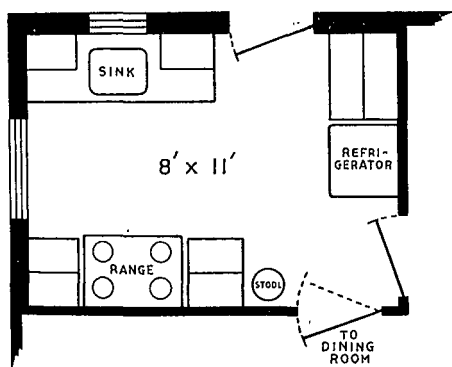
- Passage to other rooms possible without crossing work areas in the kitchen.
- A location for home freezer.

Kitchen Floor Plan 2



The L-Kitchen

Kitchen Floor Plan 4



The Separate Unit Kitchen

- Well-planned laundry space—if no other room available.
- Windows provide cross ventilation and adequate daylight without sacrificing needed wall space.
- Wash space for men—not at the sink.
- Closets for work clothes, cleaning equipment.

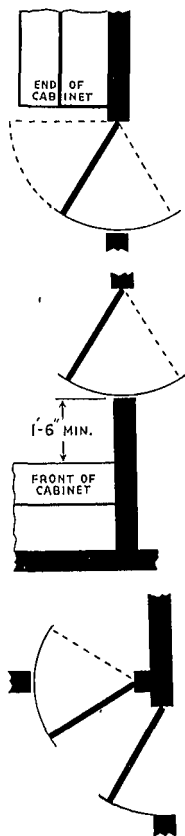
STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES

An ideal arrangement is not always possible, when remodeling the kitchen, without shifting doors, windows, partitions, and electric outlets. The cost entailed may or may not make such changes practical. Certain structural principles should be observed when planning the layout of a kitchen to assure convenient arrangements.

Doors in the Kitchen. Locating the doors near corners will permit better kitchen arrangement than centering them in the walls. A danger zone exists when a door swings toward a working unit, and is a source of fear to the worker. Plan so that the door will swing against the *end* of a cabinet or equipment or against the wall. If the door must swing

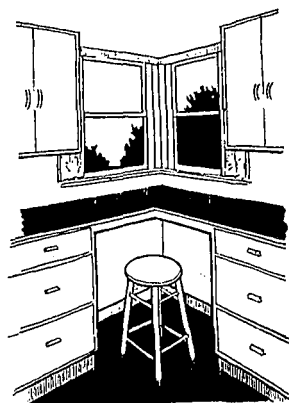
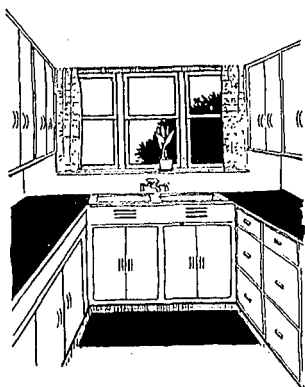
toward the *front* of a cabinet, range, sink, or refrigerator, allow an 18-inch clearance in front of the equipment for the safety of the worker. Perhaps the cleaning closet rather than a work unit can be located at the danger point. Sometimes the door can be hung to swing away from the kitchen (see plans 1, 2, and 3). Doors placed close together on connecting walls are dangerous.

For safety, swing them toward each other if there is clearance for hardware. Standard-sized doors are desirable to assure movability of furniture and equipment,

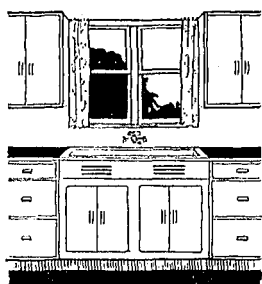


Kitchen Windows. Locate the windows where they will not interfere with plans for wall cabinets. The jamb of the window should be at least 16 inches from a connecting wall, to make room for the installation of a wall cabinet on the adjacent wall. The home-maker enjoys having a window above the sink. Another window or two near

stool can be placed under the counter when not in use. A sink across the corner is another excellent way to use the wall space under corner windows.

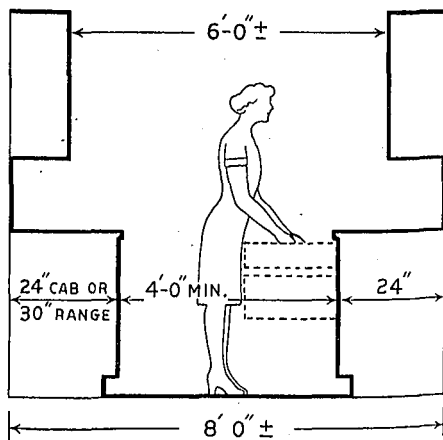


the mixing center or near the dining area will provide additional light and ventilation. Supplementing the windows with a ventilating fan will improve the



circulation of air and will carry off fumes and odors. Placing two windows in the corner is a good way to use a space that is unsatisfactory for cabinets since it is difficult of access. It is pleasant, moreover, to work at a counter under corner windows. The kitchen

Clearances in the Kitchen. A free space of 4 feet is needed in front of work spaces to allow for the opening of doors and drawers of cabinets and equipment. More clearance for the doors is required when cabinet shelves pull out. For convenience, the door to the refrigerator should open next to the work cabinet. It is important that doors of corner cabinets do not interfere with each other when opened.



Planning a Utility Room

There is a trend toward the first floor utility room in which laundering and other jobs that clutter the kitchen can be done. The usefulness of the utility room will depend upon its location and size and upon the convenience of the water supply.

FUNCTION

Primarily, the utility room functions as a first floor laundry and sewing center. It can be equipped with facilities for canning, meat cutting, and freezing. Heat and a concrete floor with a drain are important features if the above activities are centered here. The water heater and furnace are sometimes located in the utility room.

LOCATION

The utility room should be located near the rear entrance. It should not be the back entrance to the house. Preferably, there will be a rear hall with doors to the kitchen, work room, basement way, and to other rooms.

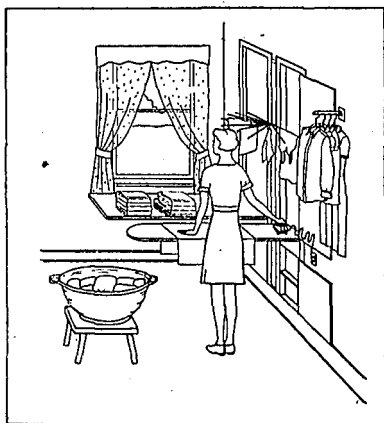
The time and energy of the homemaker will be saved by the first floor location. Trips to and from the basement will be unnecessary when carrying the clothesbasket to the line, supervising the children, answering the door and telephone, cooking, and tending to the fire. The first floor utility room can have better light, heat, and ventilation. On the other hand, the basement is a cool place in which to work in the summer. It is the logical place to can and store home canned food and the space is there to be used. The basement provides more adequate drying space for clothes when indoor drying is necessary. The location of the utility room should be decided after careful consideration of relative costs, conveniences, and possible future uses.

LAUNDRY UNIT

Since the utility room is primarily the laundry, plan the work centers for wash day first. The sorting counter or table, the stove or hot plate, and other facilities for wash day can be used for other jobs. Work centers, just as important in the laundry as in the kitchen, are determined by the four jobs involved—sorting, washing, drying, and ironing. Wash day can be simplified—saving steps, time, and motions—if the equipment and supplies are grouped according to the job to be done.

The Sorting Center. Here the soiled clothes are sorted on a long table or counter (six foot length desirable). The stove or hot plate and the water supply should be near at hand for use when stains and grease are treated before washing. A supply cupboard can be provided above or below the sorting surface.

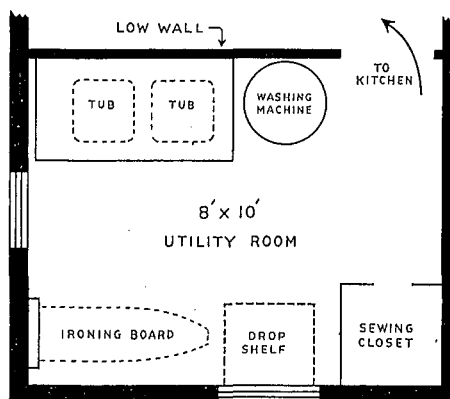
The Washing Center. This unit will come next in the circuit so that it will be near the sorted clothes and the water supply. The washing machine, tubs, clothesbaskets, and miscellaneous supplies will be needed at this center.



The Ironing Center

The Drying Center. Plan a place where the clothesline can be put up. If electricity is available, install an outlet for a fan to hasten drying. Additional lines might be required elsewhere—even trips to basement lines being necessary. If extensive improvements are being made, a closet for an automatic dryer might be planned—the dryer to be installed when funds permit.

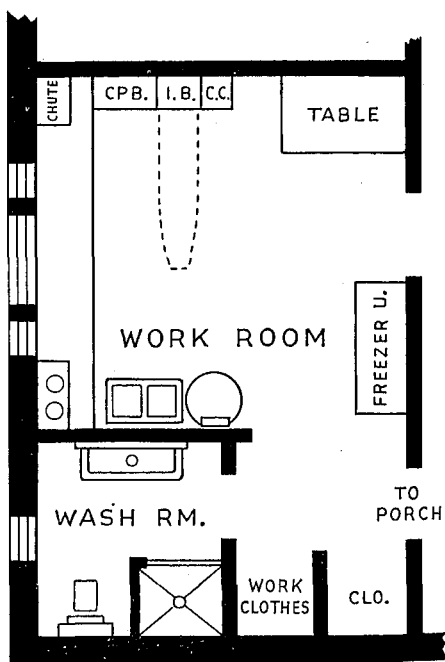
The Ironing Center. The job of ironing can be done with greater ease if the equipment is arranged within the reach of the worker. Near the ironing board, the homemaker will need the basket of clothes, a table, clothes rack, and clothes hangers on a rod or hook.



COMBINATION KITCHEN-UTILITY ROOM

To reduce costs, kitchen facilities can be made available to an adjacent utility room. By using the kitchen range and sink, it is unnecessary to equip the utility room with a hot plate and water supply. The low wall between the two rooms reduces heating costs. On the laundry side of the parti-

tion are the washing machine, built-in ironing board, and sorting table with shelves above and storage space for portable tubs below. The space along the opposite wall with storage closet and drop shelf is planned for sewing and play centers.



COMBINATION UTILITY-WASH ROOM

Every farm family needs a suitable place where the men can wash and clean up. Storage nearby is needed for work clothes. Such a place may vary from a wash basin and clothes hooks in a corner of the kitchen to a separate unit with a shower. The combination wash and work room, illustrated above, is an excellent layout, and is accessible from the porch and rear hall.

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